



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

# AFGHANISTAN

## Agriculture

July 2005



PHOTO: USAID/AFGHANISTAN

*Nadir, a farmer in Baghrām, says his irrigation has improved significantly, even at 6.5km from the Ghorband dams. In addition to improving irrigation systems, the USAID program to restore agricultural markets includes improving the market infrastructure, developing markets and rebuilding the livestock sector.*

### AGRICULTURE SNAPSHOT

- Paid more than \$1.7 million in person-days of cash-for-work.
- Trained 588,000 farmers via training/demonstration and seeds/fertilizer supply projects.
- Provided \$5 million to help establish a micro-credit facility operating through a dozen sub-lenders in 77 districts.
- Improved irrigation on over 840,000 acres of land.

### OVERVIEW

The purpose of USAID's agricultural sector development program is to improve food security, increase cropping productivity and rural employment, and improve family incomes and well being. Improved job opportunities and incomes also reduce pressures on the poor to grow illicit crops.

### PROGRAMS INFRASTRUCTURE RESTORATION

USAID is supporting the reconstruction of irrigation systems, farm-to-market roads and storage facilities, more than half of which were damaged, mined and/or destroyed because of the multi-year drought and war. Activities include labor-intensive infrastructure repairs, irrigation system restorations, and food production, warehousing and marketing facilities. To date, USAID has:

- Improved irrigation on over 840,000 acres of land.
- Rebuilt 192 miles of farm-to-market roads.
- Repaired 248 irrigation structures.
- Improved 220 miles of irrigation canals.
- Produced an estimated 4.3 million MT yield of cereal crops for 2005.
- Paid more than \$1.7 million in person-days of cash-for-work.
- Improved 147 storage / market facilities.

### TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

USAID has funded a variety of cropping and livestock improvement interventions in an effort to improve and restore quality seed production, plant materials and fertilizer supplies, and poultry and livestock health and husbandry practices. These programs have significantly improved crop production, produce quality, market values and farmers' incomes. USAID has:

- Established 17 improved seed farms in five key provinces.
- Trained 973 fertilizer dealers and 347 extension staff in 18 provinces in fertilization and pest control techniques.
- Distributed 55,800 young pullets to egg cooperative members.



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## Agriculture (continued)



PHOTO: USAID/AFGHANISTAN

*The purpose of USAID's agricultural sector development program is to improve food security, increase cropping productivity and rural employment, and improve family incomes and well being. Improved job opportunities and incomes are also aimed at reducing pressures on the poor to grow illicit crops. Here, a farmer tends his grape vines.*

- Supported 247 private veterinary assistants in 23 provinces, who have done 2.3 million vaccinations/medications per quarter to live-stock and poultry, increasing market value by \$80 to \$100 million.
- Implemented more than 200 new row crop, vineyard and orchard demonstrations in five provinces. Average yield increases of 30 to 50 percent were achieved during the past crop year.
- Trained 588,000 farmers via training / demonstration and seeds/fertilizer supply projects.
- Provided pest control, processing machinery operation and marketing advice to several dozen lead growers and seven dried fruits and nuts producer-processor entities.

### FINANCIAL SERVICES AND PRODUCTION CREDIT

The lack of financial liquidity in the short and medium term is a challenge to Afghan farmers as they begin to restore rural production systems. In response to this challenge, USAID has helped restore basic banking and credit services within Afghanistan's rural sector. USAID has:

- Provided \$5 million to help establish a micro-credit facility operating through a dozen sub-lenders in 77 districts.
- Provided more than 9,500 loans to micro-enterprises. The loans ranged from \$50 to \$3,000.
- Created a \$2 million, commercial bank revolving credit facility which has already issued approximately \$700,000 in loans.
- Provided \$3.5 million in seed money for a commercial leasing entity, and contributed \$3.8 million in funding to support the establishment of an equity investment fund which will provide 20% of its capital to commercial agro-processing and production input / export industries.

### INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

USAID supports the Ministry of Agriculture in its efforts to guide agricultural development towards participation in the global economy. USAID support is also being extended to other Ministries, such as Commerce and Irrigation. USDA is assisting USAID in this effort with experts through an inter-agency agreement.